

Foundational Knowledge Certification Scheme  
ABC-FKE

**FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE SCOPE OF CERTIFICATION**

The Foundational Knowledge certification examination is designed for individuals who analyze or process physical evidence in any discipline of Criminalistics. This examination will cover many aspects of forensic science in which any individual with at least one year of laboratory experience should be competent. These areas include documentation of evidence, evidence handling and storage, interpretation of results and report writing, laboratory safety, basic laboratory skills, basic scientific and mathematical concepts, quality assurance, etc. *Candidates are expected to have some experience performing scientific analysis of evidence.* This exam is not intended for staff whose only responsibility is for intake, transfer, and/or return of evidence.

The Foundational Knowledge Examination has been developed utilizing a DACUM process to determine the Job Duties and Tasks, the knowledge and skills to perform the Duties/Tasks, and a validation process to develop the frequency, importance, and criticality measures. See the Study Guide for a more detailed breakdown of the content of the examination.

The certification examination and scheme will be reviewed routinely, and updates to the certification scheme will be published on the ABC website.

In the event ABC makes significant changes to the scope of certification that could impact the certification status of current certificants, affected certificants will be notified directly. Notification will include any necessary remedies to ensure continuous certification.

**CRITERIA FOR INITIAL CERTIFICATION**

**Certification Eligibility**

**Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements before their application will be considered.**

**Education**

There are no formal educational requirements to sit for this examination. A background in natural science (e.g., chemical, physical, or biological science) or forensic science is recommended.

**Professional Experience**

Applicant must be currently employed by a Forensic Science Service Provider (FSSP) performing work as an analyst, a technician, laboratory support personnel, or a laboratory manager.

Applicant must have a minimum of one year, full-time or equivalent, experience analyzing or processing physical evidence for an FSSP.

An FSSP, as defined by the National Commission on Forensic Sciences, is a forensic science service provider having at least one full-time analyst (however named) who examines physical evidence in criminal and/or investigative matters and provides reports or opinion testimony with respect to such evidence in United States courts of law. Forensic science service provider is used interchangeably with forensic laboratory.

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**Certification Application Process**

A certification application must be completed for each certification an applicant is seeking. See *ABC Application Instructions (09-0302S)* for the application process requirements.

Applicants will be evaluated by the ABC Credentials Committee following the guidelines set forth by the ABC Board of Directors utilizing the criteria set forth in this document.

Applicants approved to sit for the certification examination will be considered candidates for certification. All candidates must successfully pass the Foundational Knowledge Examination to be considered for certification.

Candidates will be notified of their certification status, whether successful or unsuccessful.

Certificants may use the credentials ABC-FKE.

**CRITERIA FOR RECERTIFICATION**

The certification cycle is 5 years. Certificants are required to complete professional development requirements prior to the expiration of their certification in order to be recertified. The following are the recertification requirements for a Foundational Knowledge certification:

- Submitting signed Rules of Professional Conduct each year of certification
- Submitting annual maintenance fees each year of certification
- Attaining a minimum of 50 recertification points during the certification period, which includes attaining a minimum of 10 recertification points in Professional Involvement during the certification period

**CRITERIA FOR SUSPENDING OR REVOKING CERTIFICATION**

Certificants may be placed on probation, suspension, or have their certifications revoked for failing to complete the following:

- Submitting signed Rules of Professional Conduct each year of certification
- Submitting annual maintenance fees each year of certification

**Certificants will be provided a minimum of a 60-day notice prior to any action being taken which would result in the change of status of the certification.**

Additionally, certificants may have their certification suspended or revoked as a result of an ethics complaint.